



**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

July 26, 2005

The Honorable Carlos M. Gutierrez  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
Office of the Secretary  
14th and Constitution Ave. NW  
Room 5516  
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Gutierrez:

Every year, the Pastors for Peace caravan delivers hundreds of tons of humanitarian aid to the people of Cuba.

On Thursday, July 21, when this year's 150-member caravan attempted to cross the U.S.-Mexico border with 140 tons of humanitarian aid and hurricane relief supplies en route to Cuba, it was stopped. Although most of the desperately needed assistance and caravan members were subsequently allowed to cross, 43 boxes of computer equipment were seized at the border. This computer equipment was intended to go to schools for children with special needs such as visual impairments and learning disabilities.

These harsh actions came just two weeks after Hurricane Dennis struck Cuba and caused widespread suffering. Businesses, schools, clinics and hospitals were destroyed, and many Cubans have been left homeless or without electricity, water, and natural gas. We call on you, Mr. Secretary, to show compassion and permit the release of this computer equipment, so that the entire shipment may successfully reach Cuba.

With your help, this year's Pastors for Peace caravan can complete its humanitarian mission to alleviate the hardship of the Cuban people during their time of great need.

Sincerely,

José E. Serrano  
Member of Congress

Nydia M. Velázquez  
Member of Congress